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# ENVIRONMENTAL Fact Sheet

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## **The N.H. Lakes Management & Protection Program**

The lakes of New Hampshire mean different things to different people, but to all of us, the nearly 1,000 lakes and great ponds are symbolic of the state's unique natural beauty. Human presence in and around the waters of the state has grown significantly in this century. The Granite State's lakes provide various uses and values which cannot be overlooked. The increased pressure placed on the state's lakes has resulted in the need for an active, multidisciplinary management approach to secure the wise management and preservation of New Hampshire lakes.

Recognizing the impacts of human activities and the potential financial consequences if the quality of New Hampshire's lakes deteriorates, the Legislature established the Lakes Management and Protection Program with the passage of RSA 483-A. The program established the Lakes coordinator and the Lakes Management Advisory Committee (LMAC), which advises the DES commissioner and the Lakes coordinator in carrying out the purposes of the statute. The advisory committee is made up of 18 members, representing state agencies, municipalities, the conservation community, marine, tourism, real estate and business and industry interests and academia. The numerous projects and products of the Lakes Program encompass the broad spectrum of lakes management. The following illustrates the diversity of initiatives being pursued or completed by the Lakes Program.

### **Lakes Management Criteria for New Hampshire State Agencies**

This working document, as mandated by statute was developed by the LMAC and the lakes coordinator in 1996. One of the cornerstones of the program, the document spells out 106 recommendations specific to lake management which the state and its agencies should implement through new initiatives, existing programs, legislation, and other means. Essentially, it is an effort by the state to closely scrutinize its performance regarding lake management and to make improvements where necessary. Since its production, the recommendations have been monitored for implementation. Those recommendations still outstanding are presently being addressed.

### **The New Hampshire Guidelines for Coordinated Lake Management and Shoreland Protection Plans**

This document, also a statutory requirement, has been developed by the program in cooperation with the LMAC and the New Hampshire Office of Energy and Planning. It is designed to provide municipalities and lake associations with the information they need to develop and apply lake management and watershed management plans at the grassroots level. In addition to

including the Comprehensive Lakes Inventory, this compendium document outlines the who, what, where, and how for the preparation and implementation of management plans.

### **Comprehensive Lake Inventory**

The *Comprehensive Lake Inventory* (CLI) was designed to guide the user in the collection of information about a specific lake and its watershed with the understanding that it will be utilized when developing a lake management plan. Ultimately, this data will be used to develop state and local management techniques, which will be implemented to protect or restore the natural characteristics (physical, chemical, and biological) of a waterbody while accommodating the important economic, social, and recreational values and uses. The CLI is to be used in conjunction with its companion document *The New Hampshire Guidelines for Coordinated Lake Management and Shoreland Protection Plans*. Please visit the Lakes Management and Protection Program website listed below to download a copy of the *Comprehensive Lake Inventory*.

### **Lakes Forum**

Governor Lynch convened the first *NH State Agency Lakes Forum* on February 24, 2006. The purpose of the forum was to bring state agencies with lake-related responsibilities and state-wide lake organizations together to identify better ways to coordinate efforts and preserve and improve the state's lakes and ponds. During the meeting, participants identified 11 current and critical topic areas and 41 action items related to lake management. The lakes forum provided opportunities for state agencies to look at overlapping jurisdictions and coordinate and communicate about lake issues more effectively. Action items identified from the lakes forum are being addressed by the forum participants.

### **NH Clean Marine Initiative**

The *NH Clean Marine Engine Initiative*, a proactive approach to control pollution, was the first of its kind in the country. Marine dealers voluntarily agreed to participate by setting sales goals for clean marine engines. In 2000, DES and the New Hampshire Marine Trades Association (NHMTA) signed a voluntary agreement to accelerate the phase-in of low pollution outboard engines. This approach has since been adopted by several other states. In 2001, EPA New England presented DES and the NHMTA with an Environmental Merit Award for this unique program.

In 2002, US EPA Region 1 launched the New England Clean Marine Engine Program. It was modeled after the NH Clean Marine Initiative and was designed to accelerate the sale of low pollution two- and four-stroke engines. The effort, involved a wide range of retailers, manufacturers, trade associations and state and federal environmental associations in all six New England states.

### **"Sister Lakes Program" -- A Partnership Between Lake Winnepesaukee and the Sea of Galilee, Israel**

This unique initiative was conceived in 1993 when the Israeli Minister of the Environment toured Lake Winnepesaukee with then DES Commissioner Robert Varney, state limnologist Jody Connor, and James Braver of Laconia, founder and director of Sister Lakes. This private non-profit organization, the Union of Local Authorities in Israel, EPA, DES, and UNH are engaged in a cooperative relationship to exchange information on the institutional and technical aspects of

lake management, volunteer monitoring, water quality data collection and analysis, and lake protection strategies.

### **Lake-Related Legislation**

The Lakes Management Advisory Committee annually reviews existing and proposed legislation, and offers testimony to the General Court on lake-related legislation. When appropriate, the Lakes Management Advisory Committee proposes legislation for consideration by the General Court.

### **Technical Assistance**

Since its inception, another cornerstone of the Lakes Program has been the technical assistance it provides to private interests and the general public regarding lakes and related issues. The Lakes Coordinator meets with private citizens, lake associations, and municipalities across the state to provide guidance on water quality, lake management and shoreland development.

### **Cooperation with Other State Agencies and Organizations**

The Lakes Coordinator acts as a liaison and facilitator to promote and maintain communication and cooperative efforts between state agencies and other relevant organizations when lake or pond resources may be impacted.

### **Recreational Use Conflicts**

According to RSA 483-A, DES and the LMAC, in cooperation with numerous other agencies and organizations, shall determine that appropriate recreational uses of lakes are consistent with the carrying capacity and character of each waterbody in the state. Optimizing the use of surface waters, while minimizing the impacts to the resource and conflicts among users, is becoming an increasingly important issue to New Hampshire.

**For further information about the N.H. Lakes Management and Protection Program**, visit the DES website at [www.des.nh.gov/organization/divisions/water/wmb/lakes/index.htm](http://www.des.nh.gov/organization/divisions/water/wmb/lakes/index.htm), or contact Jacquie Colburn, Lakes Coordinator, PO Box 95, Concord, NH 03302-0095; (603) 271-2959; [jacquie.colburn@des.nh.gov](mailto:jacquie.colburn@des.nh.gov).